

John 2 records the first of the miracles that Christ performed. These were signs to prove that Jesus Christ is God. Matthew depicted Jesus Christ as being the Messiah, Mark depicts him as being a servant, Luke shows him as being man, and John shows him as being God. He is all those things and more. The last verse in the book of John says, *"If everything he did, were written down, the world couldn't contain the books that would have to be written"*. You need to understand these are just things that are chosen, picked out by the Holy Spirit to show us the things that he wants us to know.

John 2:1-11 On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, (2) and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. (3) When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine." (4) "Dear woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My time has not yet come." (5) His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." (6) Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons. (7) Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim. (8) Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet." They did so, (9) and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside (10) and said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now." (11) This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him.

Verse one says, in this translation, *on the third day*, it literally says in the Greek, **and on the third day**. The Greek word "chi" or "and" is especially important because it connects it with what has taken place before. Apparently, it is three days from when Christ was with John the Baptist, baptizing on the side of the Jordan. Cana was about a two to three days journey from where he had been with John the Baptist. *[And] on the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding.* The wording is such that Christ was invited to the wedding because of his mother. In that day, a wedding was a really big deal. I've learned through being a pastor, and having been involved in many weddings, that they are big deals to the people that are involved with them. But today's big deals are nothing compared to those in Jesus' day. They had no television, they had no movies, they didn't have a radio to listen to and they did not have the internet to talk to each other. So, when they had a wedding, it was a chance to get together socially. Since this was a rather small town, probably a large part of the town's people would be there. It's disappearing now, but years ago when I pastored country churches, when there was a funeral there were certain people who showed up whether they knew the

person that had died or not. They came just so they could visit and talk with people that were there. The wedding in John's Gospel would be similar but obviously a more joyous time and it would last weeks. That wasn't only in the Jewish society, but was the general practice in that day. Even as far back as Genesis we see this concerning Jacob's first marriage.

Genesis 29:16-28 Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. (17) Leah had weak eyes, but Rachel was lovely in form, and beautiful. (18) Jacob was in love with Rachel and said, "I'll work for you seven years in return for your younger daughter Rachel." (19) Laban said, "It's better that I give her to you than to some other man. Stay here with me." (20) So Jacob served seven years to get Rachel, but they seemed like only a few days to him because of his love for her. (21) Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife. My time is completed, and I want to lie with her." (22) So Laban brought together all the people of the place and gave a feast. (23) But when evening came, he took his daughter Leah and gave her to Jacob, and Jacob lay with her. (24) And Laban gave his servant girl Zilpah to his daughter as her maidservant. (25) When morning came, there was Leah! So Jacob said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? I served you for Rachel, didn't I? Why have you deceived me?" [You need to understand that they didn't go to a motel or some swanky place. There would have been no light, it and she would have had a veil on. It was totally dark in the tent. He ended up with the wrong sister and didn't know it until the sun came up the next morning.] (26) Laban replied, "It is not our custom here to give the younger daughter in marriage before the older one. (27) Finish this daughter's bridal week; then we will give you the younger one also, in return for another seven years of work." (28) And Jacob did so. He finished the week with Leah, and then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel to be his wife.

Another example is the story about Samson's marriage to a Philistine woman.

*(Judges 14 (10) -----*Samson made a feast there, as was customary for bridegrooms. (11) When he appeared, he was given thirty companions. (12) "Let me tell you a riddle," Samson said to them. "If you can give me the answer within the seven days of the feast, I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty sets of clothes.

Even in that day marriage was a big deal and it lasted seven days. Now days, we do everything in a hurry. One of the things that has ruined us is McDonald's, where we just automatically feel like it's our privilege to go somewhere and get a meal in five minutes and be on our way. (And it better be right.) Or you go to Walmart, and no matter what your attitude is, no matter what, they are going to smile at you and say the customer's always right. Well, things don't always work that way, and in the wedding that Christ was at, there was a problem – they ran out of wine.

We're going to assume that Jesus' mother was related to the family, and she was helping with the wedding as many of you would do. The family she's working with is poor, and we know this for several reasons. Reason 1: Mary is a friend, Mary's poor, and poor people usually hang around with poor people. Reason 2: They ran out of wine.

There are certain characteristics that exist in different cultures. Some things that wouldn't embarrass us as North Americans, would be totally out of place in another country. I remember a South American missionary friend, who is dead now. When he came home on furlough and visited his sponsoring churches, he couldn't show all of his pictures because they would be inappropriate in the United States. In the area he served, when you moved into a family or a village, you were considered a guest for three days and all the women wore clothes. But after three days, they took them off and packed them away and saved them. Therefore, he could only show pictures from the first three days of his arrival. One thing a woman there would never do is show her any part of her legs. That would be indecent. However, they would go around with exposed tops. In that society, one thing was embarrassing but, in our society, something different is embarrassing. In Christ's day it was a real faux pas to run out of wine, especially at a wedding feast. Now remember that the whole town is probably there, and the wedding is going to go on for seven days. But if they would run out of wine, it is said that a couple might still be hearing about that on their 50th anniversary. It was something that would be remembered from then on.

Mary, Jesus' mother, says to Jesus in verse three *"they have no more wine."* Now analyze verse four. *Dear woman, why do you involve me? Jesus replied,* He use "gune" instead of "meter" for the word translated as "woman." "Gune" is not a derogatory term, in fact it was a very kind and gentle term. But calling his mother "gune" puts a little bit of distance between him and Mary. *My time has not yet come.* I believe that Jesus understood in latter days, Mary would be elevated and glorified to a level that she wasn't supposed to be. So, here the scripture is very clear how she is portrayed and how she's dealt with. She was a very fine, virtuous woman. She was a great enough individual, from a human and divine standpoint, that God chose her to be the mother of the Son of God. But she was still human. Look at [Mark 3:31-35](#): *Then Jesus' mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him. (32) A crowd was sitting around him, and they told him, "Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you." (33) "Who are my mother and my brothers?" he asked. (34) Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, "Here are my mother and my brothers!*

Now look at Christ's response: *(35) Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother.* In other words, we're all alike. Even Mary had to come to Jesus Christ for salvation. She was no different than anyone else.

Going back to Verse four again: “*dear woman, why do you involve me?*” “Dear woman” is very cordial. It is not a reproach, it is not negative, but then he says something that is a little bit of a rebuke. *Why do you involve me?* In other words, he literally said, very gently: ‘*What is it to you and me?*’ When I was younger, I remember there was a saying that isn’t around anymore. Somebody would tell you something, and you’d stand there and say *What does that have to do with the cost of tea in China?* Well, that’s sort of what he did. “*What’s this have to do with me? Why are you telling me this?*” There is a little bit of a reproof there. Why would Jesus rebuke his mother? Consider this: What if you were the parent of the Son of God? When would you turn him loose? How long do you tell him what to do?

He’s telling her that the time has come for him to listen to his heavenly father, not his earthly mother. He loves her and will always have a special relationship with her, but it’s time for her to let him go.

John 2: (4) "Dear woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My time has not yet come. The way this is structured doesn't mean it's not time to begin start his public ministry. It literally refers to when Jesus was on the cross.

John 19:26 When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son,"

Christ responds to Mary, while he's hanging on a cross, using the same words as he did in chapter two. In other words, *the time has come, gone your son.*

Then his mother said to the servants, *do whatever he tells you.* We see that she’s been behind the scenes running things. This is the very best advice you're ever going to get from anyone. Whatever God tells you to do, you do it. You want to be a good parent - tell your children, whatever He tells you to do you do it. But I there's more to it than that. Mary understood something that few people ever understand. She knew the love of Christ, as very few people know his love. After all, their relationship was very close. She knew that Christ cared about the details of life. There's a tendency on our part to think that, well, this is a small thing, I don't need to take this to God, I'll just deal with it myself. The lack of wine was not an earth-shattering event, but it was an issue. Mary knew Christ, and she knew the tremendous love that He has for people. Do you know, something? God takes care of you on a daily basis in ways you can't imagine. At the wedding feast there's going to be a miracle, and 90% of people at that wedding are never going to know it. How many miracles take place in your life on a weekly basis, and no one even recognizes what's been done. Mary believed that he would respond appropriately, and he did.

Here is a three-part truism:

Point 1. The more you know Christ, the more you will love him. The more you know Christ, the more you **automatically** love him.

A woman came to me for counseling, and she was one of the most beautiful women I have ever seen in my life. Her face was just gorgeous. (Honestly, I did not lust after her, but her face was so beautiful you just wanted to look at it.) I had to tell myself, don't stare at the woman, you're counseling. Well, I counseled her for a period of time and then her husband came in and I counseled him. I want to tell you something, after I got to know her, I had no trouble not looking at her face. In other words, the more I got to know her, the less pretty she was, and it was easy to not look at her.

Ephesians 3:14-19 For this reason I kneel before the Father, (15) from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. [Paul then provides a reason for this prayer] (16) I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being [man], (17) so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, (18) may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, (19) and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Point 2. The more you grasp his capacity for love, the more you will **trust** him.

You have to know Him to love Him, and then you begin to grasp his capacity for loving you. *For God so loved the world.* What does that mean? We don't understand that kind of love. God sent His only begotten Son - *John 15:13 Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.* The greatest thought you're ever going to have is that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. We don't grasp that. You don't know how much God loves you. I don't know how much he loves me. But it is a love that to understand, I have to be strengthened on the inside. I know as I stand here, if the Holy Spirit doesn't witness it to you, it will mean absolutely nothing because this is on a supernatural basis. In fact, he says that in *Ephesians 3:19 and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.* In other words, it is beyond human ability to understand. But as you begin to know him, you begin to love him. Then as you begin to know him and love him, you begin grasp a small splinter of how much he loves you, and that makes you trust him. If you knew how much God loves you, if I knew how much he loved me, I would never, ever have a single solitary worry in this whole world. How could you? Listen to what he says in *Romans 8:32 He [speaking of God] who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also,*

along with him, graciously give us all things?

If God gave you his son, what's he going to hold back? What is it that's so valuable that he will treasure and keep it for himself? Nothing. Nothing.

1Peter 1:8 Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy,

Peter was writing to people who had begun to grasp the tremendous love of Christ. As you begin to know Christ and begin to love Him you begin to comprehend his love for you. It makes you trust him. It's an automatic response. There is an indescribable joy and peace that comes over you that is beyond human expression.

Point 3. The more you trust Him, the more **intimate** the communion you will have with him.

Philippians 3:10-11 I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, (11) and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.

I want to **know** Christ. There's a desire for intimacy here. There is a starving for something. This is a good kind of hunger. Romans 1 talks about depraved hungers that God gives to men who pervert their own lifestyle, and he gives them a hunger that can't, can't be satisfied, which leads to all kinds of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. But there is a hunger that is a good hunger which is described in *Psalms 42:1 ---As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God.*

So that's it. The more you know Christ, the more you're going to love him. If you don't love him, it's because you don't know who he is. The more you love him, and the more you know him, the more you're going to understand how much he loves you. And the more you see how much he loves you, the more you can trust him. And the more you know him, and the more you love him, and the more you realize he loves you and the more you trust, you automatically have a desire for more intimacy.

Mary understood some things that most of us don't understand. Christ cares about your life. God loves you, and He cares for you. He cares about the small things, and he cares about the large things because he loves us.

She told the servant, *whatever he tells you to do, do it.* She felt for sure he would do something. *John 2:6 Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews*

for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons.

The Jews had established ceremonial washing requirements beyond those described in Deuteronomy. They would wash their arms and hands a certain way before meals or they would wash during a meal a several times, they would wash after a meal, and if it was a celebration, it might require different washings. There were all those people out here and they don't have running water, so they've got 150 or so gallons worth of water stored up so the guests can be washed. The jars may have been some water in them, but they would not have been full at this time. The jars were heavy and were not designed to be carried around. They couldn't take a hose and fill them up. They had to carry water to them.

John 2:7 Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim.

I'm convinced that Mary said more to the servants than *just do whatever he tells you to do*, because they filled them all the way to the top. That's the way we're supposed to live. I think Mary gave them a cue, perhaps she said *whatever he says do you do it with all your might?*

For example, read the story of Elisha's, (the old testament prophet) passing. The king of Israel was Jehoash, one of the bad kings who did what was evil in God's sight.

2Kings 13:14-19 Now Elisha was suffering from the illness from which he died. Jehoash king of Israel went down to see him and wept over him. "My father! My father!" he cried. "The chariots and horsemen of Israel!" (15) Elisha said, "Get a bow and some arrows," and he did so. (16) "Take the bow in your hands," he said to the king of Israel. When he had taken it, Elisha put his hands on the king's hands. (17) "Open the east window," he said, and he opened it. "Shoot!" Elisha said, and he shot. "The LORD's arrow of victory, the arrow of victory over Aram!" Elisha declared. "You will completely destroy the Arameans at Aphek." (18) Then he said, "Take the arrows," and the king took them. Elisha told him, "Strike the ground." He struck it three times and stopped. (19) The man of God was angry with him and said, "You should have struck the ground five or six times; then you would have defeated Aram and completely destroyed it. But now you will defeat it only three times."

Israel's military is depleted at this point in time, and there's not much of an army left. Jehoash weeps over Elisha and uses exactly the same words as Elisha did as his father Elijah was departing from the earth by chariots and horsemen in a whirlwind. This implies that Jehoash believed that Elisha was the secret to any chance that Israel had to have a victory over its enemies, and there was nobody to take his place.

Elisha told the king to get a bow and arrows and shoot an arrow while Elisha puts his hands on the king's hands and the arrow is shot. Elisha prophesies that Jehoash had shot the arrow of victory and that the Arameans would be completely destroyed at Aphek. Then Elisha told the king to take the arrows and strike the ground with them. Jehoash only shoots three arrows and stops. Elisha was angry at him and declares that Jehoash will only have three victories, but he could have completely destroyed Aram had he struck the ground five or six times.

If God told me, through a prophet, that I want you to strike the ground with three arrows, I would just beat the ground until he made me quit. I'd have sweat running off because I'm not quitting until he tells me to quit. But to Jehoash three times meant "I don't take this religion thing very seriously. Jehoash just beat the ground only three times and quit. **"Fill the water jugs."** The servants filled them to the brim. They took it seriously.

John 2:8 Then he told them, **"Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet."** They did so,

They're ready to dip out of a jar that's filled to the brim. Some people want to live for God with everything they've got. They're going to fill a jug up and they're going to beat the ground until he says quit. But others want to know how little they can get by with. Let me give an example. It's okay to drink. How much is okay? Until I get a buzz or just a little bit? Or I'm sloppy drunk? Or young people – You know that. immorality is wrong. So how far is too far? I mean, can we get a little bit? How far do we go before it's sin?

One person says, "I want to know how close to sin I can get but not quite sin.: Somebody else says "I want to live for Christ." Do you see the difference? Somebody says "How much money do I have to give before God's okay with me? Do I need to give 10% or 5% or 11%? If I give 11%, will I get an extra bonus? Somebody else may say I just want to give! How many of you would like to wake up tomorrow and win 100 million dollars from Publisher's Clearing House? Now, how many of you thought I would really like that so I can give it away versus how many thought I'd really like to have that to buy stuff for me? See the difference? Some people live for Christ and they're going to fill a jug until it's full. Others think that almost full is enough. How close to the line can I get before it's a sin? That's a sorry way to live. You're only going to go around once in this life. I want you to take the biggest bite out of life you can take for Christ.

John 2:8-11 Then he told them, **"Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet."** They did so, (9) and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. [If the master had known where it came from, he never would have drunk it because drinking from a bottle that was meant for purification rites would have been a no no!] Then he called the bridegroom aside (10)

and said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now."

Do you know what's neat about that? It's those who serve God who find out what he's all about. One of the tremendous axioms of Christianity is that those who serve, know Christ best. Not those who are served.

(11) This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him.

There are six words used in the New Testament for the word sign. This particular word means it is something miraculous that causes you to look beyond what just happened. It's not like a stop sign. It's like a yield sign. At a stop sign, you have to stop and then you look. A yield sign means that you are to look beyond what's there. This word means to look beyond what just happened. The "what," in this case, is the person of Christ. He has moved beyond the witness of John the Baptist, to the witness of miracles. Think about something for a moment. In that day, wine was usually diluted by two thirds because they drank it as a beverage with a meal. The young couple who were poor, in all probability had at least 100 gallons left over to sell, which was a great present from Christ. He takes care of the details of life. Moses did something with water - he turned it into blood, remember? That's what the law does. If you're going to live by a set of rules, it's nothing but blood. Wine in Scripture speaks of joy. Christ came to turn water into wine, he came to give us real life. Read what Paul says, as he's talking about the Lord Jesus Christ and what he's done.

Romans 11:33-36 Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! (34) "Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?" (35) "Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?" (36) For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.

I want to tell you something. You have one life to live on this earth. You can live it in one of two ways. You can say, Lord, how close can I get to sin and not cross the line? Or you can say Lord, I want to live for you. I want to take a big bite on life just like it was a real red juicy apple. I want the biggest bite I can get. The choice is yours.

If Christ is not your Savior none of this applies. He wants to be your Savior because he loves you with a love you cannot understand at this point in time. All you need to do is turn to him and he'll save you just that freely. For the rest of us, I want you to know that our God loves us. He loves us with a love that we will be forever and ever and ever trying to understand. You spend this week meditating on the tremendous love he has for you, and your problems will

begin to evaporate. You'll still have them. But they'll be in perspective. One more time: *Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! "Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?" "Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?" For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.*

Father, we thank you so much for what you've done for us. Oh, how we thank you for Christ. How we thank you that you love us for the love that we cannot comprehend. Help us by your spirit to understand you better and better and may our relationship with you become more intimate each day for your honor and glory in Jesus name. Amen.